[redacted]

To the Honourable

William Chetwynd Esq;

One of the *Lords Commissioners* of the ADMIRALTY.

SIR,

I *Doubt not but I shall easily meet with your Excuse, for making Choice of You to patronize an Attempt of this nature, since there is none that has served his* King *and* Country *with greater Zeal and Integrity in those high Employments that you have passed through, than yourself; nor exerted those* Great Abilities *that you are Master of, for the Good of the Publick, with greater Approbation, or more universal Applause.*

Think not, SIR, *'tis my Deſign to enumerate your conſpicuous and extraordinary Talents, nor yet to ſay any thing of your being poſſeſs'd of every Quality that adorns a private Life, or renders it uſeful, they being already ſufficiently known and admired by all. I only intend to do greater Service to a Cauſe that every honeſt Man ſhould be engaged in, by prefixing your unexceptionable Name, and as it were directing my Country-Men what ſort of a Choice to make.*

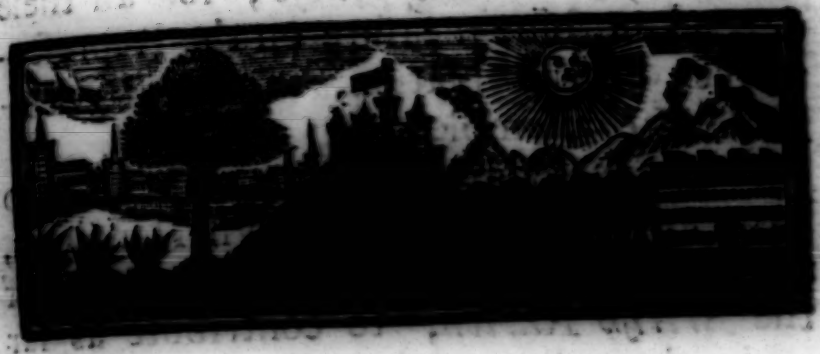
If we could hope for a Britiſh Senate, *compoſed of Members like you, ſtudious to promote their Country's Welfare; it would be no hard matter to foretell that we ſhould be the eaſieſt, happieſt, and moſt flouriſhing People in the World: But tho this be too great a Bleſſing to expect, yet every true* Briton *ſhould lend his Aſſiſtance in ſuch a manner as he is able; and if I can contribute any thing towards ſo valuable an End, it will be the greateſt Pleaſure imaginable to,*

SIR,

Your moſt Humble and

moſt Obedient Servant,

Britannicus.



Some Seaſonable Thoughts *relating to the Election of an Enſuing* PARLIAMENT, *&c.*

AT a Time when the Nation impatiently expects the Calling of a *NEW PARLIAMENT*, and when the *Paſſions*, *Prejudices* and *Miſinformations* of a great number of People, are ready to lead them into *Errors* and *Miſtakes*, and to cauſe them *undeſignedly* to purſue wrong Meaſures; it is certainly neceſſary to ſay ſomething in the Cauſe of Truth, and to ſet things as well as we can in a true Light.

What I am going to write about, is the Concern of every Man who values his

his *Liberty*, his *Religion*, his *Poſſeſſions*, his *Eaſe*, or his *Happineſs*; for all theſe depend in ſome meaſure on the Repreſentatives of the Nation, in *PARLIAMENT* aſſembled.

It is therefore incumbent on all who have any Value for their own Happineſs, the Welfare, Peace and Tranquillity of the *Britiſh Nation*, to contribute as far as in them lies to the Choice of Men of Probity, Honour and Juſtice, and who will zealouſly promote the Intereſt of their Country: By this means Credit will revive, Trade flouriſh, our Religion and Liberties be ſecured, to bleſs ſucceeding Generations.

Should the contrary happen, what a Scene of Miſery are we not to expect? which I ſcarce dare think of, much leſs mention: nor indeed need I, for there are none but what may paint to themſelves all the diſmal Conſequences of Diſcord among thoſe who are at the Head of Affairs: nor do we want Inſtances of this kind to teach us, that nothing can render us compleatly miſerable but that.

If ever there was a time that required Men to lay aſide any *By-End*, any *private Intereſt*, it is now: if ever it was neceſſary to forget all *perſonal Piques* and *private Reſentments*, it is much more ſo in this critical Juncture of Affairs. The

Safety

Safety of our Civil and Religious Liberties, the Prosperity of Trade, a Regard to our own Lives and Possessions, certainly merit a little Consideration; I might have said, command our utmost Attention.

I cannot think there is any *English-Man*, that is not wholly destitute of Thought and Consideration, and that has not lost all Regards to common Honesty, or who has any thing to lose, or any thing to hope for, that would knowingly and wilfully oppose the Interest of his Country. He may be misinform'd, he may be imposed upon, but he cannot procure his own Ruin with his Eyes open.

To avoid therefore Mistakes of this nature, every one should judge for himself, he should have a better Opinion of his own Understanding, and not by an easy and undesigning Credulity, swallow every thing that others present him with. There is nothing of Mystery in discerning what will make us Rich and Happy, from what will make us Poor and Miserable; there needs no *Logick*, no understanding of *Latin* and *Greek*, to know when we enjoy the Benefits of our *Laws*, *Religion* and *Liberties*, and when we do not. 'Tis generally owing to too mean an Opinion of our own Abilities, that we run all the Lengths of designing Men, and that we submit

ſubmit our Underſtandings to the groſs Impoſitions of a Set of Villains, who are attempting to hurry us to Ruin and Deſtruction.

But far be it from me to inſinuate, that every one who leads his Neighbour or his Friend into Miſtakes, does it with ſuch a horrid Intention; Miſinformation, perſonal Differences, or too haſty Judgments, may lead Men into Errors, and Errors that he may propagate too without being chargeable with any ſuch Deſign; but then he ſooner or later ſees his Miſtake: the Event of things, the ill Succeſs of his Politicks, or the imminent Danger of his Country, diſſipates the Miſt that was before his Eyes, and cauſe him to ſee things in their proper Colours.

Beſides theſe, may be added *Prejudices* of any kind, which almoſt every one is aware of, and yet too few get over; theſe as it were hoodwink the Soul, cramp our Reaſon, and hinder the free Uſe of our Underſtanding: while we are under theſe, Arguments have no Force, we do not lie open to Conviction, for we are commonly deaf to all that is ſaid to us. Yet it is ſome Conſolation to think that they are not unconquerable; they are often vanquiſh'd by ſome one or other, and might oftener be ſo than they are: The Remedy is eaſy—*aude, ſapere, incipe*—Do but reſolve

reſolve to think for yourſelves, and ſet about it inſtantly, and then the Buſineſs is half done. The Supreme Being has given us Abilities, and why ſhould we be wanting to ourſelves?

To ſuch as theſe then, that are reſolved to bear me company in my *impartial Enquiries*, do I addreſs myſelf, and I hope I ſhall not altogether loſe my labour.

I take it for granted then, that every *Freeholder* in *Great Britain* is convinced that he ought to aſſiſt in ſending ſuch *Members* to ſerve in *Parliament*, that will make the *Good*, *Welfare*, and *Intereſt* of their *Country* their chiefeſt Care; this doubtleſs is the Meaning of every one that gives his Vote freely, and is *honeſt* enough not to be ſway'd by any *inferiour Regards*, *private Views*, or *mercenary Ends*.

But then the great Queſtion is, *What is the true Intereſt of our Country?* In determining this, indeed, we do not find ſo great a Unanimity; but what it is owing to, we ſhall ſee hereafter.

Some mean by the Intereſt of their Country, *an inviolable Attachment to a certain Family*, and hence become very zealous for Abſolute Unlimited Monarchy, and Indefeaſible Hereditary Right: that is, in plain *Engliſh*, they would give up

their *Laws*, *Liberties*, and *Religion*, nay, themſelves and Poſſeſſions, into the hands of one Man, to diſpoſe of as he pleaſes: and therefore it is plain, that to enſlave their Country, and to promote the Welfare of it, that *Arbitrary Power*, *Chains* and *Shackles*, and the *Security* of our *Laws*, *Perſons* and *Eſtates*, are with theſe Men the ſame things; which is downright Nonſenſe.

The very End and Inſtitution of Government is for the Good of the Perſons governed, and whenever this End is neglected, they ceaſe to be lawful Governours, and become Tyrants and Oppreſſors; and therefore the People have a Right to throw off the Yoke, and ſet themſelves at liberty.

'Tis the Happineſs of our Conſtitution, that the Power of the Prince is bounded by Laws, and conſequently we can never be at a loſs to know when we are injur'd and oppreſs'd, and when we are not; what is done by the whole Legiſlature, by the joint Conſent of the *King*, *Lords* and *Commons*, is a Law, to which the Prince himſelf, as well as the Subject, muſt conform. While therefore none of theſe Laws are violated, nothing that is dear and valuable to us can be in any danger but thro Miſtake, which, when once perceived, may eaſily be rectified.

Now

Now I leave it to any one to conſider which is moſt for the Intereſt of their Country, Slavery or Liberty, wholeſome Laws or the unbounded Will of the Prince; the free Poſſeſſion of our Lives and Fortunes, or delivering them up to the Diſpoſal of one who at the beſt is but a Man, and conſequently ſubject to Errors and Miſtakes.

I purpoſely avoid ſaying any thing of *Religion*, becauſe I am convinced that where the *Church* by Law eſtabliſh'd is *Proteſtant*, no one Member of it would be for bringing in *Popery*, but only for the ſake of *Abſolute Monarchy*; and therefore there is no danger that they ſhould *directly* endeavour to eſtabliſh the *Pope*'s Supremacy, to introduce *Saints*, *Relicks*, *Jeſuits*, *Monks*, *Friers* and *Nuns*, like *Drones* or *Caterpillars*, to ſuck up the Fatneſs of the Land, and live upon the honeſt Induſtry of the People; for I am perſuaded they cannot think this the *Intereſt of their Country*.

But ſtill the Queſtion recurs, *What is the Intereſt of our Country?* I anſwer, without any more Negatives, It is to have our *Laws*, *Religion* and *Liberties* preſerved, without which the Nation can neither be eaſy nor happy.

This Aſſertion requires no Proof, it is ſelf-evident; for who will deny that Li-

berty is not better than Slavery, Laws than Tyranny, Proteſtant Decency than Popiſh Superſtition. The Laws are every *Engliſh-Man's* Birthright, his Property; not the greateſt Man in the Nation can deprive him of any thing contrary to Law; nay, he in a manner is Legiſlator himſelf by his Repreſentative: And is not this better than being left without Defence, entirely at the Will of the Prince? But if any one is ſo fond of Arbitrary Power, they need not go far to enjoy the Bleſſings of it; for I would deſire them not to endeavour to make others Slaves againſt their Wills.

For my part, I do not know one tolerable Argument on the other Side that is worth confuting, and I can't help thinking that Men muſt be ſtrangely infatuated not to ſee it. If Fetters, Chains and Wooden Shoes have ſo many Charms, why are they not equally viſible to all? Till they appear to me, I muſt ask their pardon for not judging as they do.

But what ſhall I ſay to them that really know, and profeſs to know wherein the Intereſt of their Country conſiſts, and yet act contrary to it; that own the Principles here laid down, and yet endeavour to weaken the Hands of the Government. I ſhall not preſume to enter into the Views of ſuch Men as theſe, nor ſo much as ask them

them what Government they would ſet up, ſince they are Enemies to the Pretender; but ſhall rather, in purſuance of my Deſign, enquire what Grounds they have for Uneaſineſs under his preſent Majeſty. That which has diſguſted great Numbers of theſe diſcontented Perſons, is the Affair of the *South-Sea*, which has been ſo very detrimental to this Nation. It muſt be own'd, that whoever deſign'd the Ruin of ſo many Families, the Diſtreſs, Miſeries and Poverty of ſuch great Numbers of People, are *Villains* that want a Name, that ought to be tranſmitted down to Poſterity with the greateſt Marks of Infamy; they are Plunderers of their Country, that cannot ſufficiently be deteſted. But how does this affect the King? Does it blot the *Annals* of any *Monarch*, merely to have great Misfortunes happen in their Reign? If Sickneſs or Famine happen'd in the Time of any Prince, was he ever thought a worſe Governour? Did the *Plague* in the Time of *Charles* the *Second* create him any Enemies? Surely whatever happens without the *Conſent* or *Knowledge* of a Monarch, can never be objected to him as a Fault.

But ſuppoſe the King had really committed any Miſtake, muſt we for that reaſon go to make our Condition a hundred times worſe? Becauſe we have loſt

a

a great deal of our Money, will not it be mighty prudent to throw our Rights, Religion and Liberties after it? and out of an extravagant Fancy enſlave ourſelves and Poſterity? If Experience did not teach us, one would think it impoſſible that there were ſuch Madmen to be found.

But tho I made this Suppoſition for the ſake of expoſing the Inconſiſtencies of ſome among us, yet I am far from thinking that *King* GEORGE had the leaſt hand in that *Deſtructive Scheme*: I think I have Reaſons to the contrary, that are ſufficient to convince any Perſon that is open to Conviction.

The Deſign of the *Act of Parliament* that allow'd the *South-Sea* Company to enlarge their Capital Stock, was good and laudable, even no leſs than diſcharging the *heavy Debts* of the Nation. And that vaſt Numbers of both Parties thought the Scheme well projected, is plain from the Concern they had in it, and the Money they loſt by it; and can it be any Wonder, that the *King* ſhould give his Conſent to an Act of Parliament that was ſo generally approved of? Was it his Fault that any Number of Men had villainous Intentions to make uſe of their Power to the Deſtruction of their Country; every thinking Man muſt neceſſarily believe, that none of them who were in the

the Secret would entruſt their *Sovereign* with their horrid Deſign. 'Tis ſo wild, ſo extravagant a Notion, that I am aſhamed to mention it as the Opinion of any Man. Could a Prince, who in every other Inſtance has demonſtrated the utmoſt Concern for the Welfare of his People, give his Conſent to have them rifled and plundered? He muſt have been a bold Man indeed, that durſt have made ſuch a Propoſal. Such a thing muſt have been Madneſs in the higheſt Perfection: And yet ſuch *monſtrous Improbabilities* are thoſe obliged to aſſert, who would affix the leaſt ill Imputation on the Conduct of his moſt Sacred Majeſty.

If Paſſions and Prejudices, Diſaſters and Misfortunes, did not diſpoſe the Minds of ſome to be impoſed upon by the crafty Inſinuations of our open or ſecret Enemies, there would be no occaſion to ſay any thing of this nature. *Engliſh-Men* could never ſuffer Jealouſies to be raiſed againſt the Prince that protects them. Does any Perſon need to be bid to conſider what it is they are doing, what Advantages they are giving to the profeſſed Enemies of their Country. Their Hopes are built upon our Misfortunes alone, and ſhall we ourſelves improve them to favour them, and effectually ruin ourſelves.

I cannot help thinking that every impartial Reader muſt think as I do, and acknowledge that no part of the Ills that ſo much afflict the Nation, are any way owing to his preſent Majeſty; and I defy the greateſt Enemy of our Conſtitution to produce one Inſtance wherein the Welfare and Happineſs of his People have not been conſulted, or wherein the Laws of our Country have been broke in upon. Had we any arbitrary Action, Breach of Privileges, Invaſion of our Liberties, to complain of, we ſhould have ſome reaſon to be uneaſy: but ſince our Caſe is quite otherwiſe, it is no leſs than Madneſs to encreaſe our Miſeries by our own Wilfulneſs.

It appears plainly then, that every Man in *Great-Britain*, that is a Friend to himſelf, his Country, his Religion, his Poſterity, that would enjoy the Fruits of his Labour with Safety, Eaſe and Pleaſure; muſt promote the Intereſt of his Rightful and Lawful Sovereign *King GEORGE*, nor is there any other way that the Peace and Happineſs of the Nation can be procured. If Men ſhould be ſent up to ſit in Parliament, who are Enemies to the Conſtitution, and Favourers of the Pretender, it is eaſy to foreſee what Miſchiefs would enſue; Publick Credit, inſtead of reviving, would ſink yet more;

Trading

Trading be entirely discouraged, and all Publick Affairs be at a full stand; and what would be the Consequences of these things but Poverty, Slavery and Want: Misery must necessarily appear in all its dreadful Shapes, sparing none, of what Degree soever.

I might proceed to very melancholy Descriptions, but the Thoughts are too affecting; and I the rather omit them, because I hope it will never be our Case while it is in the power of the *Freeholders* of *Great Britain* to prevent it. It will be no hard matter for them to know who are well affected towards our Church and State, and who are Friends to our happy Constitution, and who are Enemies; especially if they have been Members of any preceding Parliaments, or have publickly appear'd upon any Occasion.

And here I would again caution them against listening to any Stories that tend to sully the Characters of those Gentlemen who have always appear'd zealous in the Cause of Liberty. It is pity that any Man that has had a hand in the rifling of such Numbers of People as the late Plunderers of their Country had, should appear again in Parliament; and it will certainly be as great Pity that any should suffer under an unjust Imputation.

The Secret of the *South-Sea* Villany was certainly entrusted with very few, and consequently there must be several for whom they had a particular Esteem, and whom they distinguished by their Favours, who knew nothing of their Designs, and I am confident never suspected whither they were driving. Must I be guilty of Robbery, because one whom the World (as well as I) takes to be an honest Man, makes me a Present, and is found afterwards to be a Highway-Man? It is very certain, that none ought to suffer as Conspirators, when they never were concerned in a Plot.

I cannot but again repeat, out of a Regard to Justice and Equity, that it is very hard any Person should suffer meerly for being favoured by Villains. I ever was, and ever shall be an utter Enemy to publick Oppression; but yet I have given my self so much time as to consider, that a Suspicion of Guilt only, makes no Man guilty. It may serve the Ends of crafty Statesmen, to mark out for the *publick Odium* those whom they have any private Grudge against, and magnify their Failings so far as to exasperate the People against them, or even feign Miscarriages where there are none; but it becomes every prudent and circumspect Person to weigh Matters deliberately, and not by becoming

becoming Tools to designing Men, procure their own Destruction.

I speak not this to extenuate the Faults of any who have designedly brought on the Calamities of the present Time; 'tis the Innocent, and not the Guilty, that I would vindicate. Too hasty Judgments have condemn'd vast Numbers, when deliberate Consideration has acquitted them; it would certainly be very hard that the Cause of Liberty should be deprived of some of its best Friends through unjust Suspicions. Every Man is to be esteemed honest and just till the contrary appears, and Charity obliges us to think the most favourably, where there is no direct Proof.

Now what can I say more to prevail upon my *Fellow-Country-Men* to engage in the Cause of Liberty, Justice and Honesty? *England* has been long famous for being tenacious of its Rights and Privileges, and shall it now degenerate? Are the Rights of an *English-Man* less valuable than they were heretofore? Is Slavery more amiable, and Chains less cumbersome, than they were at the Time of the Glorious Revolution? I doubt not but the *Antient Genius* of this happy Nation will inspire the Breast of every *True Briton* to exert himself nobly, at a Time when our Enemies hope to reap the greatest Benefit from our private Animosities.

You ſee plainly we can be happy no other way, than by adhering to his preſent Majeſty *King GEORGE*; 'tis he that maintains our Laws and Privileges, defends and promotes the *Proteſtant Intereſt*, is merciful to his moſt inveterate Enemies, ſtudies to encreaſe the moſt valuable Branches of our Trade, and deſires nothing more than the Peace, Eaſe, Happineſs and Welfare of all his Subjects.

While this Character is maintain'd, it would not only be a Fault, but the higheſt Ingratitude, not to adhere to his Intereſt; ſhall we deſert our Protector, one that aims at nothing more than to make us a happy and flouriſhing People? And ſhall we leave him too for one that will bring us into a thouſand times worſe Condition than we are; one that is a *profeſſed* and *zealous Papiſt*, attended with a needy Train of Followers, who want nothing more than to ſhare the Riches of the Nation among themſelves, beſides a long Scroll of Arrears due to the Pope and ſome other Perſons, that ſtand in great need of being paid pretty good Intereſt. I only hint at theſe things; for was I to enumerate the complicated Miſchiefs that would attend ſuch a Change, it would require more Room and Time than I can at preſent allow: it is ſufficient for us to know at preſent, that there is not the leaſt

Compa-

Compariſon between our preſent Circumſtances, and the inevitable Miſchiefs that muſt neceſſarily follow ſuch a Change. We have not now the leaſt Reaſon to complain, or the minuteſt Sign of a tyrannical or oppreſſive Monarch; our Religion is ſafe, our Laws are not violated, our Privileges are ſecure; what then ſhould we complain of, or what be uneaſy at? He has done nothing without the Conſent of the Lords and Commons of the Realm. As for the little Stories and nonſenſical Forgeries of idle-headed Fellows, that want nothing more than to breed Diſturbances, that they may plunder and ſtrip the Houſes of ſubſtantial People, every Man's own Underſtanding is a ſufficient Preſervative againſt them; and it is very remarkable, that ſome have been ſo plain, open and barefac'd Falſehoods, that thouſands of Country People have diſproved them, only by coming up to Town, and believing their own Eyes.

I do not deſire you to believe any thing becauſe I aſſert it, I would fain diſſuade you from being impoſed upon by others, and for the ſame Reaſon would not impoſe upon you myſelf. I cannot find that I have ſaid any thing that is not plain and evident; I have no other View than the Service of my Country, and to inform my ſelf and others to the utmoſt of my Abilities.

Upon

Upon the whole, it appears to me to be out of all queſtion, that unleſs you make Choice of a *True Britiſh Parliament*, Men that are hearty for our Conſtitution in *Church* and *State*, Enemies to the *Pretender*, *Slavery*, and *ſlaviſh Principles*; a numberleſs Train of Evils will follow, which may be far more eaſily remedy'd now than hereafter. It is eaſy to bring Misfortunes upon ourſelves, but not ſo eaſy to get over them: Diſeaſes are by far more eaſily prevented than cured. And to attain this End, this happy and valuable End, which every Friend of his Country heartily wiſhes for, we ſhould forget as much as poſſible our Paſſions and our Prejudices; we ſhould remember that we are *Britons*, and prefer the Peace and Happineſs of our Country to every other Conſideration, for it is impoſſible that our Native Land ſhould be miſerable, and we not ſhare in ſome meaſure the Evils it ſuffers: We ſhould remember too that we are Men, which will hinder us from thinking the Sufferings of Fellow-Creatures are not altogether to be neglected by us, when we have the Means and Opportunity of coming ſeaſonably to their Aſſiſtance. As Men too we ſhall be inclinable to forget Miſtakes and Failings wherever we imagine there have been any, eſpecially where ſuch a Forgetfulneſs may be of future Service to our Country.

In

In a word, I cannot help concluding but you will think as I do, That there is no other way to Peace and Tranquillity at home, Honour and Reputation abroad, to cauſe the Government to be eaſy, and the Subjects happy. Since therefore we know what we are to purſue, what Methods to take; let us not be prevailed upon by any Inſinuations whatever to go into other Meaſures, nor think thoſe Men can have honeſt Deſigns, that argue againſt common Senſe, that contradict Propoſitions as plain and evident as that two and two make four. I ſhall then venture to ſay, that if every *Freeholder* in *Great Britain* will make uſe of his own Reaſon, *King GEORGE*'s Reign will be undiſturbed, and our Country always be in a happy and flouriſhing State.

FINIS.

FINIS